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Analysts Fear Soviet Move on Poland

U.S. intelligence analysts fear that with the end of the 26th Soviet Party Congress in Moscow this week the Russians may finally intervene militarily in the Polish crisis.

"Most knowledgeable American observers feel that even if Soviet military intervention is not quite inevitable, it remains a strong possibility, particularly if Poland is still in a state of bubbling crisis when the Soviet party congress concludes the beginning of March," says a secret report prepared for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The report indicates that nonmilitary reaction from the United States and its allies will not deter the Soviets from crushing the Poles by force.

"While the Kremlin appears basically to understand that severe, prolonged interruption in East-West relations would be a consequence of military intervention," the report states, "Moscow would count a loss of party control in Poland a graver threat."

Noting that in general the threatening posture of Warsaw Pact forces on Poland's borders has eased somewhat since December, the report adds that these units "can be quickly filled out." In addition, of course, the Red Army is already positioned in force within Poland's borders.

"Polish authorities have once again bought a little time with [the appointment of] a military premier with disciplined but moderate views," the Senate report says, but adds the gloomy assessment that the Poles' options "are increasingly scarce and risky."

While the men in the Kremlin are regarded by U.S. analysts as more relaxed than they used to be about the "bending of socialist structures" by their Eastern European satellites, "it is the open-ended anarchy atmosphere in Poland that gravely concernsthem," the report states. The anarchic situation stems from internal weaknesses in the two contending forces in Poland — the Communist Party and the national labor union, Solidarity.

"It is problematic whether a strike moratorium will hold, since Solidarity's national discipline on tactics has been increasingly breaking down," the Senate report says. It adds:

"The party leadership also remains divided on tactics, and the cumulative impression of proliferating confrontation, with the Polish party each time yielding all or most of the settlement to the workers, has clearly undermined Moscow's confidence in the Polish party's ability to control the situation."

One option still open to the party leadership is "some variant of a martial law-type approach by the Poles themselves," the report notes. "But this option remains highly risky, and could easily ignite the explosion of force it would be designed to prevent."